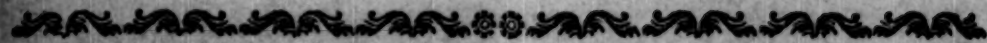
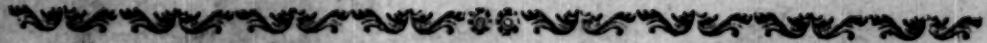


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THE
CAVE OF DEATH.
AN ELEGY.





T H E
C A V E O F D E A T H.
A N
E L E G Y.

INSCRIBED TO THE
MEMORY OF THE DECEASED RELATIONS
OF THE
A U T H O R.

*Nunc ultro ad cineres ipsius, et ossa parentis
Haud equidem sine mente reor, sine numine Divum,
Adsumus.* ———

Virg. Æn. Lib. 5. v. 55. &c.

C A N T E R B U R Y :
Printed for the A U T H O R,
And sold by SIMMONS and KIRKBY.

M D C C L X X V I.

CAVE OF DEATH

H. J. G. Y.



RECORD OF THE DEATHS

A. U. T. A.

W. J. L. S. J. S. J.

W. J. L. S. J. S. J.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following lines were written in memory of the deceased relations of the author, and most of the incidents are not the result of poetical imagination, but real matters of fact, which occurred nearly in the same order of time, and in the same manner, in which they are here represented. Such a peculiarity, while it renders this little piece more interesting as a family memoir, may perhaps make it less worthy of the attention of the public. But the author, fearful it might some time or other find its way into the world charged with the additional errors of transcribers, thought it expedient to commit it himself to the press, that he may be answerable only for his own. To the judgment of the public therefore (even under the disadvantage

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advantage above-mentioned) he readily refers it; persuaded that, if he shall appear to have an heart warm in the interest of humanity, and alive to the feelings of social virtue, their candour will induce them to throw a veil over the imperfections of this domestic elegy.

T H E



THE
CAVE OF DEATH.

A N E L E G Y.

By The Rev^d T. Journey of Dorchester

I.

THE solemn dirge hath ceas'd---yon vault contains
Another victim which my heart held dear :
'Tis nature bids me give to grief the reins,
And urges from my eye the swelling tear.

II.

With-hold, my friends, your too officious aid,
Uninterrupted let my sorrows flow ;
I mean to view this mansion of the dead
With all the decent luxury of woe.

III. Hail,

III.

Hail, awful gloom, congenial horrors hail,
 Where my full bosom finds some short relief,
 Where nature's efforts may at large prevail,
 'Till patience come, and make me smile at grief.

IV.

Tremendous sight! The taper's glimm'ring ray,
 Reflected from the pendent damps above,
 Throws o'er this Cave of Death a transient day,
 And guides my footsteps to those friends I love.

V.

In Death I love them: His vindictive arm
 May hurl the bolt, or point th' envenom'd dart;
 Still, still survives th' indissoluble charm,
 Which grafts their dear idea to my heart.

VI.

Now Mem'ry wakes; rais'd by her magic pow'r
 Scenes of past bliss my present peace annoy,
 She paints in livelier tints each festive hour
 To Friendship sacred, and domestic joy.

VII. Various

THE CAVE OF DEATH.

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VII.

Various our lot : In youth's propitious dawn
We greet with rapture life's approaching day,
While pleasure spreads the flow'r enamel'd lawn,
And social intercourse beguiles the way.

VIII.

But soon, alas ! this fancied vision's o'er,
The paths we tread more dark, more dreary grow ;
Our lost companions fall to rise no more,
And all beyond is solitude and woe.

IX.

Too well my bosom feels this painful truth,
While at my feet those dear associates lie,
Whose sage experience warn'd my wayward youth
Of many a snare, of many a danger nigh.

X.

When passion would mislead, when griefs assail,
Sweet is the voice of friendship to our ear,
Sweet is the sound of love's endearing tale ;
But Death presides, and all is silence here.

C

XI. Hence

XI.

Hence, ye profane ! in secret, and unseen
His ruthless works at leisure I'll survey :
May none intrude, while Sorrow's sable queen
Moves with slow progress on, and leads the way.

XII.

'Midst the sad group, promiscuous as they lie,
She stops, and pauses o'er a brother's urn,
Whose bosom never felt one anxious sigh,
Whose heart Affliction never taught to mourn.

XIII.

For, ere ten moons were past, his infant head
Laid low in earth was snatch'd from worldly care,
Before he knew to wail a mother dead,
Or pour his sorrows o'er a father's bier.

XIV.

Your parents earliest joy, their only hope,
For you they form'd the visionary plan,
Gave to their social feelings all their scope,
While their fond fancy rear'd you up to man.

XV. Joyous

XV.

Joyous with you they hail the rising morn,
No grief annoys them, and no fear alarms :
Ere night approach, distracted, and forlorn
They grasp you pale, and breathless in their arms.

XVI.

Oft would my Sire this piteous tale relate,
Oft have I seen his bosom pant for you,
And, while he told the story of your fate,
Wip'd from his woe-worn cheek the falling dew.

XVII.

For he was gentle, and by nature kind,
To sufferance train'd, and to compassion prone :
The weight of Care prest heavy on his mind,
“ And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.”*

XVIII.

A friend to peace no peace himself he found,
A shaft unlook'd for pierc'd him in his prime ;
Deep rankled in his breast the social wound,
He languish'd, pin'd, and fell before his time.

* Gray.

XIX.

The dreadful scene's yet present to my eyes ;
Of past events the sad remembrance dear
Rekurs afresh, and of a mother's cries
The piercing sound still vibrates on my ear.

XX.

What agonizing horror seiz'd my breast,
When I rush'd onward to this work of Death,
Saw to his clay-cold lips the mirror prest,
And watch'd impatient his returning breath.

XXI.

'Tis gone for ever ; each fond effort fails,
Each art suggested by connubial love ;
For when that tyrant's stern decree prevails,
Nor widow's sighs, nor orphan's tears can move.

XXII.

Each morn, each eve, before the sable train
Your hallow'd relicks to this cave convey'd,
I fought your couch in silence to complain,
And at your side my duteous homage paid.

XXIII. There

XXIII.

There did I seek, incited by Despair,
My grief with full indulgence to beguile,
And frequent, as I dropt the filial tear,
Thought your lov'd visage smil'd, or seem'd to smile.

XXIV.

Intent I gaz'd, held by that magic charm
Which Melancholy's sons alone can know,
When all at once an uncle's friendly arm
Forc'd me, reluctant, from this scene of woe.

XXV.

Aghast, and trembling as we left the room,
Contesting passions in his bosom strove,
And, o'er his face while sorrow spread a gloom,
Flash'd from his eyes the beams of social love.

XXVI.

Weep not, my child : but learn from what is past
The ways of God, though dark, are always wise :
Affliction's cup is bitter to the taste,
But genuine Wisdom at the bottom lies.

XXVII. That

XXVII.

That lifeless corse you left is not your fire,
But a cold mass of unenliven'd clay;
His better part form'd of ætherial fire
Soars to the regions of eternal day.

XXVIII.

Those realms where God omnipotent presides,
Whose boundless mercies o'er this globe extend,
Who through life's mazy paths his offspring guides,
The widow's comfort, and the orphan's friend.

XXIX.

Lean on his aid, nor doubt a sure reward;
His pow'r will soon another parent rear,
Another friend your infancy to guard;
Believe this truth, for you behold him here.

XXX.

Your father's lips consign'd this last bequest,
This legacy, from which I ne'er will part;
Thus let me lull your struggling soul to rest,
And clasp the dear deposit to my heart.

XXXI. He

XXXI.

He spoke ; and, as he spoke, persuasion mild
Flow'd from his lips, and bade my sorrows cease ;
He smil'd with joy, complacently he smil'd,
To see my throbbing bosom hush'd to peace.

XXXII.

His pious hand upheld my feeble youth,
My steps directed with paternal care ;
He train'd me early to a love of truth,
Left Folly might seduce, or vice ensnare.

XXXIII.

But for his gen'rous aid my niggard fate
Had stamp'd disgust on my devoted head,
Driv'n from those paths of learning, which of late
With joy I trod, and panted still to tread.

XXXIV.

His bounties, dealt with an unsparing hand,
Gave me with lib'ral leisure to explore
The ways of knowledge, join the gen'rous band,
Who fought the models chaste of ancient lore.

XXXV. Nor

XXXV.

Nor ended here his love's propitious toil,
When manhood dawn'd, my youthful hopes to raise,
He on my cot bade Independence smile,
And gild with halcyon peace my future days.

XXXVI.

For Av'rice was a stranger to his heart,
That baneful vice, which tempts us to with-hold
Th' intended boon, 'till from our life we part,
And in our latest moments grasp at gold.

XXXVII.

No secret vice, no fashionable pride,
His little store exhausted to its source;
Poor to himself, but rich to all beside,
He gave to social love its ample force.

XXXVIII.

Through Nature's limits rang'd his ardent zeal,
Zeal which no sordid passion could destroy;
His was the task the wounds of life to heal,
And cause the widow's heart to sing for joy.

XXXIX. Ne'er

XXXIX.

Ne'er will my soul forget that solemn eve,
When the thick concourse fill'd this sacred fane;
With gratitude each breast was seen to heave,
And on your ashes pour the plaintive strain.

XL.

Grief wav'd her wings, and o'er the circle flew,
Quick through the whole the soft infection ran;
They sigh'd, they wept, and seem'd to say adieu,
The poor's best parent, and the friend of man.

XLI.

Blest shade! to us untimely was your fate,
Who wish'd you proof against th' attacks of age;
Yet you had reach'd life's long-protracted date,
And full of years, and glory left this stage.

XLII.

Lo! by your side another victim lies,
Who fell not by the hand of slow decay;
Early his spirit fought th' etherial skies,
Snatch'd from the world in manhood's vig'rous day.

D

XLIII. By

XLIII.

By nature's bonds, and by affection join'd
We held for ever dear a brother's name;
One common will our mutual hearts combin'd,
Our cares, our joys, our sentiments the same.

XLIV.

How great those perils which in youth we prove?
How strong those tempests which our passions raise?
One drop of gall, by that enchantress Love
Dash'd in his cup, embitter'd all his days.

XLV.

By beauty's charms and female wiles misled,
His hand he to an artful Syren gave;
The sad remembrance hover'd round his head,
Nor left him 'till he reach'd the silent grave.

XLVI.

Learn hence, ye youths, who range the flow'ry mead,
And quaff that stream where fancied pleasures flow,
That one false step may to destruction lead,
And plunge you headlong in th' abyss of woe.

XLVII. Full

XLVII.

Full oft his heart hath bled at ev'ry vein,
In secret oft he heav'd the pensive sigh,
For manly sence forbad him to complain,
And lay his griefs before the public eye.

XLVIII.

Yet there were seasons which could care beguile,
When he with rapture hail'd the festive hour,
With native humour forc'd the frequent smile,
And urg'd the weight of Wit's enchanting pow'r.

XLIX.

But vain our boasted strength, and fruitless all
Our mental faculties, when Death affails ;
Against his stern unalterable call
Nor sence, nor wit, nor eloquence prevails.

L

Is he not here?---Methinks I see him now,
From side to side he turns for ease in vain,
Waits with impatience Death's expected blow,
Torn on the rack of agonising pain.

LI.

How long, he cries, can nature's strength survive
 Amidst this storm? When will my labours cease,
 And that long-wish'd for happy hour arrive,
 Which heav'n ordains shall close my eyes in peace?

LII.

Though sharp his feelings, though on ev'ry pore
 Stood the big drop, my voice he joy'd to hear,
 While hiding grief, which inward rag'd the more,
 I pour'd the balm of comfort in his ear.

LIII.

Fondly he snatch'd my hand, and prest it hard
 In his cold palm---At once his pains subside---
 "The conflict's o'er---Our aged parent guard"---
 He cast one longing, ling'ring look, and died.

LIV.

Short was this task of love, for now to rest
 Her vital frame was hastening through decay,
 By time enfeebled, and by cares oppress'd
 Slowly she sunk to Death an easy prey.

LV. Here,

LV.

Here, here you lie, and, if the conscious dead
Can listen to the voice of those that mourn,
Accept these tears by filial duty shed,
An off'ring sacred to your hallow'd urn.

LVI.

Here now you lie, and tranquil peace is thine,
Here now you rest---To you--to all farewell---
But why farewell?---This social band I'll join,
Forever join, nor quit this dreary cell.

LVII.

Thus while my passion urg'd me to pursue
This theme, and meditate the plaintive lay,
Quick as a flash of light'ning to my view
An horrid spectre rose, and crost my way.

LVIII.

Trembling I gaz'd astonish'd : Yet to fly
Her hideous form I wish'd not----'Twas Despair ;
I knew her by the wildness of her eye,
Her frantic garb, and her dishevell'd hair.

XLI. Her

LIX.

Her right hand held a dagger, and her left
Frequent she wav'd and pointed to her breast ;
Receive this boon, she said : Of hope bereft
'Tis this will lead your wearied heart to rest.

LX.

Impetuous phrenzy in my bosom rag'd,
I reach'd to snatch it, when a sudden charm
The furious efforts of my grief assuag'd,
And with resistless force drew back my arm.

LXI.

I turn'd, and lo ! with heav'nly beauty drest,
Of form angelic stood Religion's Queen,
In easy folds flow'd down her snow-white vest,
Heav'n in her eye, and grace in all her mien.

LXII.

With joy and peace ineffable she smil'd,
Her voice persuasive o'er my senses stole,
While with celestial strains, and accents mild
She calm'd the rising tumult of my soul.

LXIII. With-hold

THE CAVE OF DEATH.

23

LXIII.

With-hold your impious hand : rash youth, forbear :
With patience learn to kiss heav'n's sacred rod :
Shall human folly, human frailty dare
Presumptuously oppose the will of God ?

LXIV.

Before his throne when all creation bows,
And with submission waits his awful doom,
May man alone the gifts his hand bestows
Forbid him at his pleasure to resume ?

LXV.

His will be thine : It leads to gen'ral good
By paths your feeble reason cannot trace ;
Fix'd as a rock it hath for ages stood
On Justice, Truth, and Mercy's solid base.

LXVI.

O'er the calm scenes of bliss his pow'r presides,
When tempests rage his arm directs the storm ;
By various means the human heart he guides,
In all it's moral temper seeks to form.

LXVII. O'er

LXVII.

This dark, and awful mansion of the dead,
Which now with anxious horror you survey,
His merciful decree ordains shall lead
To the bright realms of everlasting day.

LXVIII.

There (on this sea of life no longer tost)
Grief at your feet fast bound shall prostrate lie,
Hope in enjoyment, Faith in fight be lost,
And Death himself absorb'd in victory.

F I N I S.

